



Choptank Tributary Team

...helping to reduce nutrient pollution and restore the Chesapeake Bay, its rivers and streams.

March 18, 2011

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Chair, Environmental Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for HB 177 – Environment – OSDS – Nitrogen Removal

Dear Delegate McIntosh,

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Choptank Tributary Strategy Team in **support** of HB177 – Environment – OSDS – Nitrogen Removal.

For the past two years, the Choptank Team has focused its efforts on meeting the Onsite Sewage Disposal System (OSDS) goals set in the Tributary Strategy Statewide Implementation Plan. These are:

- One hundred percent of new OSDS installed beginning in 2010 will include enhanced de-nitrification technology.
- One hundred percent of all existing septic systems will need to be upgraded to improve nitrogen removal.

Our efforts, and those of the state to meet its Two Year Milestones, would be greatly enhanced by the passage of this legislation.

According to the Governor's Baystat webpage (<http://www.baystat.maryland.gov/sources2.html>), the nitrogen loads to the Choptank River from OSDSs in the watershed have continued to increase each year, while loads from other nitrogen sources such as farmland and wastewater treatment plants are steadily decreasing and moving towards the Tributary Strategy Goals. If action is not taken now, new systems will continue to be installed and failing systems will continue to be replaced using outdated and ineffective technology and the nitrogen loads to the river from OSDSs will continue to rise.

We have called upon the agricultural community and wastewater treatment plants to upgrade, enhance, or modify their systems to reducing nutrient and sediment pollution to our rivers and the Bay. It is time to continue our restoration efforts by focusing a serious statewide effort on reducing the nitrogen loads from OSDSs. House Bill 177 is the first step in the right direction toward achieving this goal.

Sincerely,



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